



Sour Sonnets
of a Sorehead
& Other Songs of the Street
By **James D. Naberson**

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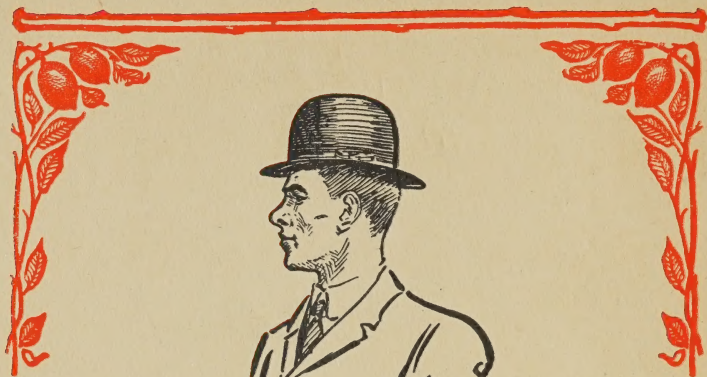
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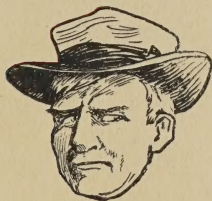


K

Yours extensively
James P. Haverson

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead & Other Songs of the Street

By James D. Haberson

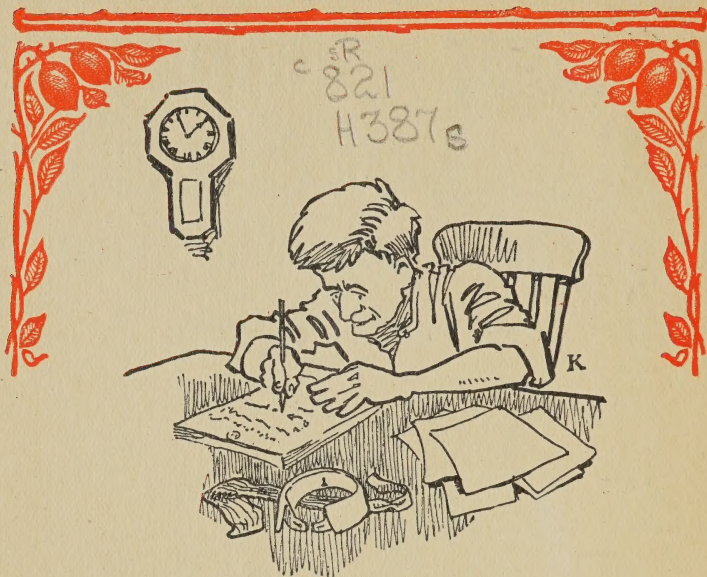


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FERGUS KYLE

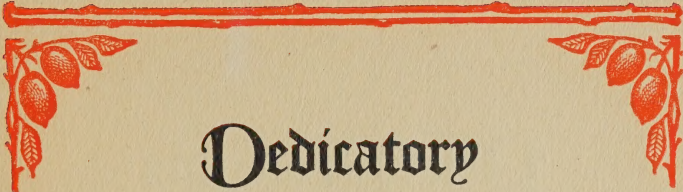
McLeod & Allen

Publishers — Toronto



What's de use of writin' dope
 About a foreign clime,
 In trying to enlarge your scope
 And elevate your rhyme?
 Put out your pipe; who wants to read
 Of Timbucktoo or Rome?
 You'd do a whole lot better screed
 About de bunch at home.

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Dedicatory

To Newspaper Men—

By One of Them

A health to the Knight of the Pencil,
A health to the Lord of the Quill,
Who works like a slave but who jests like a knave,
And who sticks to his "rag" with a will.

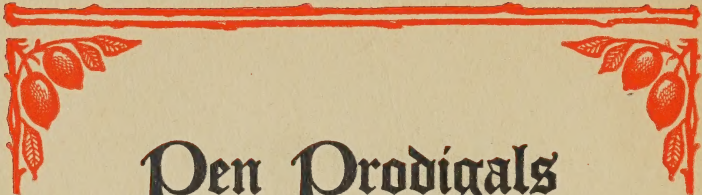
A health to the writers of fiction!
A health to the gleaners of fact!
For the lads who are young but are wily of tongue,
And are adept exponents of tact!

A health to the slaves of the ink-pot,
Who, careless of fortune or fame,
Will give their best years (missing brilliant careers)
And all for the love of the game!

A health to the man who writes "sermons"!
A health to the lad who "does courts"!
A health to them all, the disciples of gall,
Penning stories of "commerce" or "sports"!

I give you a toast, "To the Real One,
The beggar who scribbles and delves,
Who lives on the street and whose smile is a treat";
Good Fellows, I give you—"Ourselves!"

79469



Pen Prodigals

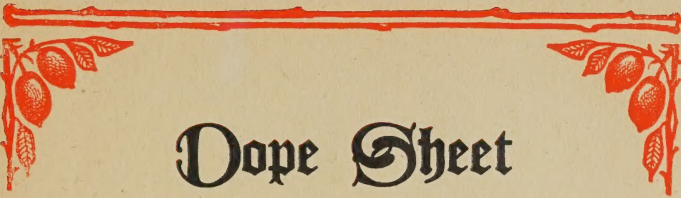
Dear little children of my pen,
The editors too often spank you,
And send you flying home again
With little notes that say, "No, thank you."

They never seem to comprehend
How much of love it took to rear you;
They seldom to your mood unbend,
But get the slipper when they hear you.

I always wash your faces well
Before I send you to a party;
Yet seldom have you rung the bell
To meet a welcome truly hearty.

Is it your tripping little feet
That oft, alas, are prone to stumble?
Is it your language of the street
That's not considered duly humble?

However that may be, my dears,
Though in a darkened desk he shoves you,
Just go to sleep and dry your tears—
Remember that your daddy loves you.



Dope Sheet

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead and Other Songs of the Street

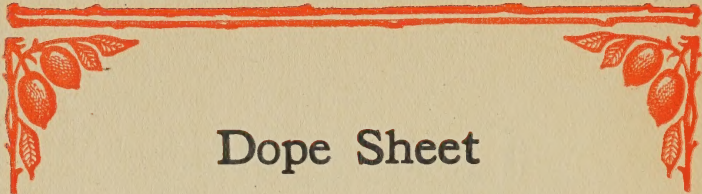
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Dope Sheet

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The Hunch

Excuse me if I seem to butt in, but did you ever stop to figure how many grins get by because the average man refuses to look down? Looking up is a prize stunt, but everyone should occasionally plant his gaze on the pavement. You may see lots of mud, but if you look hard there's color in it.

This world would not be such a one-eyed dump if the bunch would only rub the sleep out of the other eye, and put that wise lamp to work on the bunch as it blows by.

If you would turn that optic on the street, you would be next that there are doings there all the while. It doesn't follow that because a guy is a rummy, that he never happens on a wise hunch, and it's bad poker to bet that because you see a fellow humping to hang onto his body that he's shy a soul.

If you would take off time to pipe the kid that sells you papers in the morning, and the one that greets you



The Bunch

with "Going up!" every time you hit the office, if you sort of looked in on the fellow that takes your fare, and the guy that grinds your shirt, not forgetting the cop that ought to have run you in last night, you would tumble to the fact that there are others. All the while you are framing up the stunt that is to put the next best in your own game in the dippy ward of the Academy for the Dead Ones, there are others.

Get next to the fact that there are others, and you are on the wise way to wisdom.

Some say that you can't grab a grimy mitt without getting dirt on your gloves, but remember that gasoline is cheap and you are missing a whole lot if you don't sit in with the bunch every time you get a chance. They don't all play the same sort of poker, and the wisest Mike is the guy that knows them all.

Above all, don't go gunning for gloom. It was a pious thought that got loose when that guy wrote "Laugh and Grow Fat," to which might be added—Grin and grow gracious.

James P. Haverson

I'd sooner smile
Than weep,
A heap.

I'd rather laugh
Than fret,
You bet.





Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead

Sorehead Sonnet One

Don't talk to me of bein' down an' out,
Ner tell how high you've been up in
the air.

Ferget it! This is kidding on the square—

You've never been no further up the spout,
Ner deeper down ner any further out,

But what there's further still—an' I've been there.

Perhaps you think you're pretty full of care.

Well, mine's the kind of case you read about.

If it was raining luck all over town,

I'll bet, that day, I would be sick in bed,

Er else I'd oversleep an' it would be

All cleared away before I'd happen roun',

Er, failing both, when I would show my head,

You bet your life 'twould rain a brick on me.

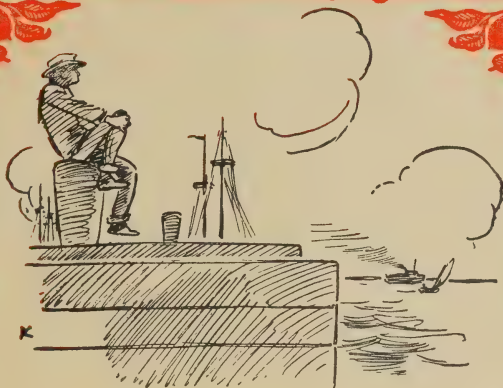
Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Two

Two months ago the union called a strike,
It's seemed like seven Sundays every week;
I'm wise it's up to me to beat a sneak,
Pack up what little goods is mine an' hike;
Just blow the burg an' hit the goodbye pike
An' be a bloomin' rustic, so to speak.
I ust to think a Reuben wuz a freak,
But now he looks the wisest sort of Mike.
This bein' "unemployed" is on the blink,
An' eatin's too infrequent when you're broke.
An' huntin' fer a place where I kin sleep
Has kep' me wide awake an' on the think.
My eyes is bad, so I don't see the joke,
Wherefore, I have made up me mind to creep.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Three

I f I could pound a pickaxe into Fate,
An' wallop Fortune wid an icy mitt,
That is the time that I would make a hit;
I'd be the Candy Kid, I beg to state.

I'd do a stunt that would be truly great;
You bet I'd make some pikers throw a fit;
Among the knockers I'd be known as "It";
I'd make the world put markers on the date.
But Joy's a Joke that never does come off,
Life's just a sellin' plater at the most;
Death plays the dope that never has been matched;
Although some rummy may be moved to scoff,
Good luck is surely waiting at the post,
An', on the square, I think that Hope is scratched.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead

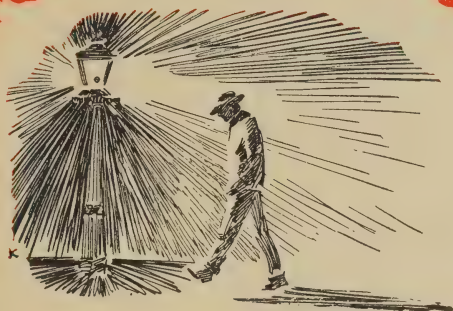


Sorehead Sonnet Four

At night when I am goin' home to eat,
I nail a car an' decorate a strap,
An' I would even think that was a snap
If someone wouldn't camp upon me feet.

If I should get a purchase on a seat,
Some ancient dame will tumble in me lap
Er else a fairy wid a pretty map
Tips me a smile—It's always got me beat.
The motor stops, you light upon the floor;
It starts again an' rolls you in the dirt;
Your pants is bust, your hat's a hopeless wreck,
An' just when you are feelin' good an' sore
Some silly mutt will ast you if you're hurt—
Oh Gee, that makes a feller feel his neck!

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Five

Hw, what's the use of anything at all?
The girl has threw the hooklets into me,
My hoodoo helped her with the third degree.
She took my picture from the parlor wall,
"Take back your junk," says she, "ferget to call.
You'll have to hunt another Honey Bee—
Go on to church," she says, "salvation's free—
Please take a tumble—let me see you fall—"
Turn off the sunshine an' ring down the dark!
I got the shake an' realize I'm shook.
She's rubbed me out, I always was a mark.
I never will ferget her goodbye look,
An' though I didn't catch her last remark,
I heard an echo answer—"Get the hook!"

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Six

Life is a lemon that is handed out
To every man when he is very young.
We are not wise that we are being strung
Until it is too late to raise a shout;

We never get a chance to pipe the tout
Until the race is on, the gong has rung,
And then we realize we have been stung.
Before we know it we are down an' out.
This is no vision of a dopey glow,
An' I will put you wise to what I mean:
A special goldbrick has been handed me,
An' I can prove that what I say is so—
To-day is Friday and the date thirteen,
It is my birthday and I'm 23!

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Seven

I f I could lay me lunch hooks on a dime
An' feel it good an' solid in me mit,
I would drop dead wid joy er throw a fit—
That's why I sing this sort of sorehead rime.

To be a simple rummy is a crime,
This honest gag don't ever make a hit
An' Virtue lands you where the dead ones sit.
The phoney gets the velvet all the time.
Some guys is boostin' things that is to be,
But half the time, they're handin' out a stall—
The silver linin' to the clouds I see
Is bogus er it isn't there at all—
Those "Cheer up" texts don't make no noise wid me.
They're only fit fer paintin' on the wall.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Eight

If I could hit a healthy handed hunch
I'd cut these moanin' tides around the bar,
This graftin' schooners er a bum cigar
An' stallin' round to get a chance to munch

A one-act meal of overworked free lunch.

If I could hit the velvet in a car

That would be going fast an' goin' far,
You bet your life that I would blow the bunch.

Oh Gee! this bein' stony broke is tough,
An' lookin' for a job would drive you blind;
This burg's a peacheroo to leave behind.

Say, I ain't handin' out no side show guff,
But talkin' on the square, an' most refined,
I think this bloomin' world's a bunch of bluff.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Nine

To-day I saw the girl go glidin' by
Perched in a Choo Choo cart an'
dressed to kill.

Say, you can bet it was a bitter pill
To see her smilin' at another guy.
I kind of tipped me lid to catch her eye;
She gave one Greenland gaze that made me ill.
I guess I caught a cold, I got a chill—
I thought I piped some snow clouds in the sky.
But that's the way wid women all the time;
The Candy Kid is him that has the dough;
But when your clothes do not contain a dime,
It's "Good-bye, babe, I guess I've got to go."
Without he's paid, will Love work overtime?
Go on an' ast me. Nit, the answer's "NO!"

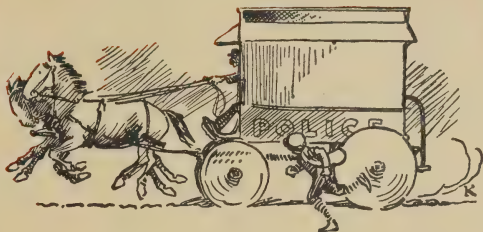
Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Ten

It is a pipe to grin when you're on top,
An' things is comin' to you on the jump;
The guy that kicks when he's in right's a chump;
But when the world mistakes you fer a mop,
An' by the time you've harvested a crop
Of every kind of trouble in the dump,
An' then Fate hands you out another bump
About the time you thought it HAD to stop—
Well, what I'm gettin' at is simply this:
I've had about enough to see me through;
An' if you're loaded up with earthly bliss,
If you're so glad you don't know what to do,
I'll hand this game a sort of good-bye kiss,
Beat it, an' leave me mail addressed to you.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Eleven

I f any cop should find me on his beat—
Me to the Pinch House in the Hurry Cart;
That is the way me troubles always start.
He'll swear I'm sailin' wid the Schooner Fleet,
An' that I had a case of Tangled Feet.
If I ain't letter perfect in me part,
The judge will hand me out the marble heart,
An' send me hikin' to the Jags' Retreat.
They've drove me dippy in the first degree;
I'm advertisin' fer a padded cell,
The Bughouse is the only home fer me.
Just why it's so is more than I can tell,
But life is war as far as I can see—
That guy was right who said that war was Hell!

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Twelve

I've heard that ancient wheeze that says a knock
Is just a boost that's sort of lost its way—
Excuse me if I smile, I want to say
That hunch is phoney, it is on the rock
That's sure to bust your dream an' sink your stock.
The mutt that doped it out should hit the hay,
An' sleep it off er let it fade away;
His time has came accordin' to my clock.
That joke is one that I refuse to see.
Get off that stuff; you're handin' out a stall
That's just a bunch of dago-talk to me;
You might as well be playin' to the wall.
Your number's up—it looks like 23.
I must admit that I don't get the ball.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Thirteen

Aw cut it, cul, quit shootin' off hot air.
Excuse me, there's a hole in your balloon;
You ought to get it fixed, good afternoon.
Me punishment is more than I can bear.
You'll have to stop this kiddin'. On the square,
I think I'll have to hike to some saloon,
Where I can get a booster if I swoon.
You're talkin' through your hat, you'll muss your hair.
Quit handin' out this Happy Harry guff,
This Joy-Talk gives me freckles on the brain,
Believe me when I say I've had enough.
Go on, get next, you're laborin' in vain—
If pikers wouldn't boost the bloomin' bluff,
I wouldn't be so anxious to complain.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Fourteen

The other day I nearly got a job;
“Good pay an’ easy work,” the paper
said.

I started for the address on the dead—
But what’s the use?—You should have seen the mob.
I tried to pass one husky-lookin’ slob,
An’ ever since I’ve had to stay in bed
An’ wear this rotten bandage on me head,
Feelin’ exactly like a strangled squab.
It seems that hope an’ me has got to part;
Me bunch of luck has surely gone astray;
For me, life’s been a sort of early frost.
I must have picked a lemon at the start;
You couldn’t move me hoodoo wid a dray—
It looks like Fate has got her fingers crost.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Sorehead Sonnet Fifteen

It's me to join the Pikers' Promenade,
An' play the biggest anvil in the band,
So that should put you next to where I stand.
I am a rummy of the highest grade;
Just pipe the pattern the inventor made
The best he could. He turned me out by hand,
But since he found we wasn't in demand,
He ain't worked near so careful at his trade.
Say, bo, if you had drawn the cards I've drew,
An' stacked against my phoney kind of luck;
No matter if the union saw you through
Or trun you down, I bet that you'd have struck—
I bet if you wuz me an' I wuz you,
Then you would do the same as me, an' duck.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Sorehead Sonnet Sixteen

I've switched that dippy dope I smoked before,
That pipe I used to puff gives me a pain;
The storm is off, it isn't goin' to rain—
The girl an' me is swappin' smiles once more.
It ain't no wonder she was feelin' sore,
An' that she had me labelled, "Bugs, insane."
I'm mighty glad she's spoke to me again,
An' you can bet me hardluck flag is tore—
If I take back that doleful dope I've wrote,
She says, the scrap is off an' peace is patched;
She's ruled me grouch ain't old enough to vote,
That chickens doesn't count till they is hatched—
I'm wise me pen was bent, I was the goat,
An' after this that Sorehead plug is scratched.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Appreciation

I heard a piker grouchin' yesterday
'Cause they was shy on beauty in
this town.

I guess he's never watched the sun go down
Strikin' some high white buildin' on its way
Just like a reg'lar spotlight in a play,
An' leavin' all the rest a deep, dark brown
With big black shadows hangin' all aroun',
Just servin' notice Night had come to stay.
That rummy owns a bang-up auto car,
His house is like a mansion in the skies,
An' he was puffin' at a big cigar;
You'd think a guy like him could use his eyes
An' kind of frame things up the way they are;
He shouldn't need a kid to put him wise.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



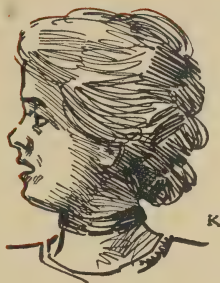
A Tough Triangle

HIM

Say, kid, there ain't no other girl but you;
I'm reg'lar dippy 'bout your eyes an' hair;
You're all there is er ever was er were!

If you would say that you would love me too,
There ain't no limit to the stunts I'd do,
Just fer to show you I was on the square.
You've got me goin' forty ways fer fair,
I'd like to be the Candy Kid with you—
There's nuthin' to it, kid, you've got me good,
I'm playin' straight and wouldn't turn the queer
Ner pass a lemon. Even if you stood
Fer it, I wouldn't hand no phoney steer.
Ner spring no four-flush even if I could,
An' this ain't overheated atmosphere.

3 Other Songs of the Street



A Tough Triangle

HER

Go on, fergit it, make a quick skidoo—
I ain't fell off no Christmas tree to-day.
Say, beat a sneak, me friend, an' on your way,—
The disappearin' act's the stunt fer you;
Commence to toddle while your shoes is new,
This ain't the station where the rummies stay.
I like your nerve all right but you're too gay,
Get flappin' now, fer it is time you flew.
'Tain't no use handin' out that misfit talk
What you have copied from some phoney show.
If you ain't busted you are badly bent,
So do the dainty an' begin to walk.
Before you got here, it was time to go;
Me eyes is waitin' just to watch you went.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



A Tough Triangle

HER SISTER

You bet if he would fall in love wid me
An' tell it to me in that flossy way,
I'd hold me arms an' ast him in to stay,
An' when he'd gaze into me eyes he'd see—
You bet, that's all that there would need to be;
There would be nuthin' I would have to SAY.
An' he would never want to go away,
An' I would never want him to, but Gee!
He never even looked at me at all.
If I would only not be quite so small
An' have long skirts like her, an' would be fat—
(She's only two years mor'n me at that)—
Then he would know I loved him an' might care.
You bet I'd tell him—if I'd only dare.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Tribute

I seen you at de show de other day,
An' say you was de thirty-third degree,
De bes' t'ing in that show shop I could see—
Dat's how I had it figgered anyway.

I seen you cryin' when that dago jay
Was goin' to trun de hero in de sea.
I bet if you would cry dat way fer me,
I'd lick de lobster if it spoiled de play.
I wouldn't care fer anything but you,
If you would be a steady pal of mine,
There ain't a single thing I wouldn't do
To make you happy all along de line—
If you would be me girl an' love me true,
Den every other skirt would be a shine.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



A Throw-Down

Turn on the power, you didn't hear no bell.
You say you thought you did? Well,
you're in wrong.

I've got no sister—Gee, your nerve is strong.
Excuse me, if I seem to say farewell.
This ain't the market fer the dope you sell;
You'd better mingle wid some other throng.
Just sift into the breeze an' blow along.
What's that? Ain't you got goin' YET! Say, Nell,
It makes me sick the way some guys butt in,
The phoney plays they'll make to flag a skirt
An' how it is they think they ought to win,
An' why they ain't afraid they might get hurt.
I wouldn't want to do no person dirt,
But Gee, I wish the cops would run them in!

3 Other Songs of the Street



A Pipe Dream

I f I could be an actress in a show,
You ought to see the happy-rags I'd wear;
An' fer my beau, I'd cop a millionaire.
The men would rubber everywheres I'd go,
An' he would whisper to me soft an' low,
"Gee, but I love you, Madmazell De Vare."
Then I would look as if I didn't care—
But when we was alone I'd let him know.
If I would get a chance, I'd be the goods.
You bet, I'd keep them talkin' all the way.
I'd be just full of "temperamental moods,"
An' I'd create sensations every day.
I'd send the phoneys hikin' to the woods
An' be the candy on the Great White Way.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



At the Show

I went to see a show the other night;
'Twas called "The Sinless Soul of
Sal, the Skirt,"

An' everybody tried to do her dirt
Except the hero who was actin' white,
An' say, his talk was surely out of sight.
The villain was a fussy sort of flirt—
Oh Gee, if I'd the ironin' of his shirt—
But then he got it in the neck all right.
It had me guessin' all along the rout',
About the hero an' his lady friend,
How luck would linger with that phoney scout,
What kept the help that someone said they'd send—
But it was great the way they'd worked it out
So all got what was comin' in the end.

3 Other Songs of the Street



A Yeller Pup

Ayeller pup ain't got no snap,
Jes' knockin' roun' de streets.
It looks like Fate was out to slap
A yeller pup.

He has to dodge each kid he meets;

No lady holds him in her lap;

Fer him, life ain't no box of sweets.

His home ain't marked upon de map;

He's listed wid de bums an' beats,

An' any cur is game to scrap

A yeller pup.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead

Triolets of Trust



Him

Aw, w'at's de use
uv a guy like me
To try an' make a hit?
I'm wise, me number's
twenty-t'ree—

Aw, w'at's de use
uv a guy like me?
I've doped me dream
an', Hully Gee!

I figgered I was It—
Aw, w'at's de use
uv a guy like me
To try and' make a hit?

3 Other Songs of the Street

Triolets of Trust

Her

Dere's lots uv use fer
a guy like you,
Yer makes a hit wid me.
Yer makes me tired,
g'wan, skiddoo!—

Dere's lots uv use
fer a guy like you.
I'm wid yer, kid,
ye're not so few;
I likes yer style, d'ye see?
Dere's lots uv use
fer a guy like you,
Yer makes a hit wid me.



Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Fourflushin'

Makin' a bluff wid a shell an' a pea,
Hopin' de guy hasn't nerve to see
Wid a hand er a big discussion,
Bettin' yer last to a sou markee—
Fourflushin'.

Formin' a trust wid a paper uv pins,
Tellin' yer steady o' all yer sins,
Fer the fun uv just watchin' her blushin',
Swearin' yer glad dat de last wuz twins—
Fourflushin'.

What does it matter what tools ye use,
Hushin' de baby er hittin' de booze,
Er quittin' de gang what's lushin'?
It's playin' de game when yer stand to lose—
Fourflushin'.

3 Other Songs of the Street

Good Gospel

"Live, laugh an' love," is what the poet said,
An' he was long on wisdom when
he spoke;
Says he, " You'll be a mighty long time dead."

No matter if you're well or sick abed,
No matter if you're flush or stony broke;
" Live, laugh an' love," is what the poet said.

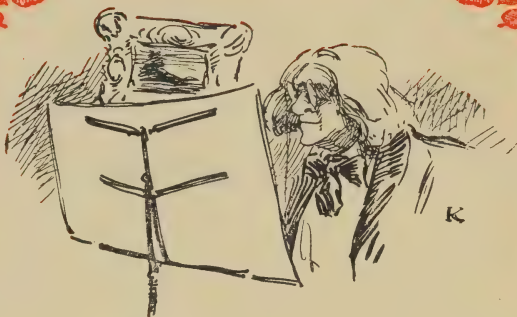
Say, he was bettin' right upon the red;
You bet, he had the proper dope to smoke—
Says he, " You'll be a mighty long time dead."

If I could find the dump where he was fed,
I'd bite into the grub if I should choke—
" Live, laugh an' love," is what the poet said.

If you should want to grouch, just grin instead;
They'll wake you up in lots of time to croak;
Says he, " You'll be a mighty long time dead."

Ferget it, bo, there's lots of tears been shed,
Best brighten up your lamps an' see the joke;
" Live, laugh an' love," is what the poet said;
Says he, " You'll be a mighty long time dead."

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Common Tunes

I've been to hear de dago bands,
I liked de ladies' clo'se;
But, Gee, I missed de common tunes
Dat every feller knows.

Dey sprung a simpony in X,
A malady in A;
But dey're a frost beside de tunes
De street peannies play.

Swells talked uv "execution" an'
"De masters uv teckneek,"
I didn't wait ter hear de end,
I cut an' made me sneak.

3 Other Songs of the Street

Her mine, de old Ratskiller,
Where all de fellers goes;
An' ye kin hear de common tunes
Dat every feller knows.

So if ye says grand opry, pal,
Me 'ristocratic nose
Is lifted wid a high disdain;
I strikes a haughty pose.

Dose rapsodies may be de goods,
But not fer mine, I goes
Te hear de old Ratskiller tunes
Dat every feller knows.



Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



In City Streets

In city streets, dull, cold and gray,
Twin tyrants, Want and Greed, hold sway,
But still they hold a charm for me,
A lure that calls as calls the sea

That sailor men must e'en obey;
Or as the perfume of the hay
Will lure the rustic lad away
Until he longs to turn and flee
From city streets.

'Tis here the harpy seeks his prey,
The bunco-steerer hunts the jay.
Why am I then a devotee?—
'Tis simply that I love Marie—
She dwells in town—and so I stay
In city streets.

3 Other Songs of the Street



A Glimpse

A frowsty cap on his tousled curls,
A ragged coat on his lithe young
back,

Worn old shoes that flit about,
Dodging trolley and passing hack—
These are the things that you do not see;
These are the things that are not worth while,
Once you have caught in the sordid street
All of the wealth of his glad young smile.
Daily he peddles his papers there,
Set in the heart of the city's strife,
Gayly smiling and debonair,
Selling the sordid tales of life,
Calling the news that will sell the sheet,
All I know is his morning smile
Brightens my day in the dingy street.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



A Call

I have seen the sun rise out of the sea
In a golden, fiery ball;
I have stood at eve in the meadow lands;
I have heard the eerie call
Of the snowy owl in the northern woods;
I have watched the mating birds
In the somnolent peace of southern lands;
I have sat by the Western herds;
I have talked with men in many walks—
I have walked with many men
And have seen each, turned by the given word,
Go back to his own again—
The rustic back to the meadow lands,
And the sailor back to the sea,
While the West calls ever to her sons
And the city streets to me.

3 Other Songs of the Street



Boost!

'Tis better to boost for to-morrow
In a glad, irrepressible way,
Than to frame up a compact with sorrow,
And hopelessly hammer to-day.

'Tis better to jolly misfortune,
Fourflushing a heartful of joy,
Than to rail and bewail and importune
Till, even your God, you annoy.

Get out and get into the game, lad;
Draw cards, and sit in with the bunch;
For the man who is hopelessly lame, lad,
Is the chump with the pessimist hunch.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Two Estimates of Bernard Shaw

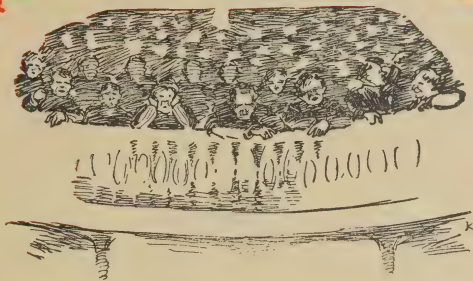
From the Boxes

Now, really, Mr. Bernard Shaw,
You're truly very funny;
Your style's so very Candid—Ah—
Yet seems to get the money.

Your plan of handling fads, you know,
Is highly analytic;
They say you were a critic once—
How fares the supercritic?

But surely Shakespeare could be left
Above the rabble's coarse guffaw?
Please don't tear ALL our idols down.
Tut, tut, Friend Bernard, also Pshaw!

3 Other Songs of the Street



Two Estimates of Bernard Shaw

From the Gods

Say, cul, you've got your nerve all right.
What's more, you've got the proper hunch.
We like to see you soak the swells,
And, say, you hand them out a bunch.
The gang is with you every jump;
You bet the gods enjoys the lunch.

Say, you're the goods, all right, all right.
We're wise you've got the public cinched;
We're with you all the way, old pal;
Here's hopin' that you don't get lynched.
You bet we'd all write plays like yours—
If we weren't scared that we'd be pinched.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Thrills

De talk about sensations
An' moments filled wid bliss,—
A killin' down in Wall Street, p'raps
Yer floosy's lovin' kiss.

Them wild excitin' tremors
Don't get to me a bit
Wid de moment w'en de pitcher takes
De leather in his mitt.

De home team may be losin'
Er winnin' in a walk;
De guy at bat may be de goods,
Er just an awkward gawk;
Dere's lots of time for yellin',
But I kin only sit,
About de time de pitcher takes
De leather in his mitt.

3 Other Songs of the Street

You bet I'm no spring chicken,
I've ben about a few;
I've heard dat spiel Bill Shake-
speare wrote

What says dere's nuthin' new—
He never seen a big ball game,
Er I guess dat he'd admit
He'd bar de time de pitcher takes
De leather in his mitt.

If I should live a t'ousand years,
An' saw a game each day,
I'm pretty sure dat I would feel
De same canary way;
An' if I was Mathoosalum,
I'd nearly t'row a fit
W'en I would see de pitcher take
De leather in his mitt.



Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Knights of the Round Table

In val'rous days of old,
As I have often read,
For honor, love and gold,
King Arthur's heroes bled.

A deal of blood was shed,
But still it will be found
Some blissful hours were sped,
Oh, Knights of the Table Round.

Sir Knights, those days foretold,
Though they be done and dead,
A race of heroes bold,
Who battle in thy stead
O'er stacks of blue and red,
Where kings and queens are found—
Some blissful hours are sped,
Oh, Knights of the Table Round.

3 Other Songs of the Street

And as the hands unfold
Their fates of joy or dread,
Let no man's feet grow cold,
And no man lose his head.

No needless words are said,
One scarcely hears a sound;
Yet blissful hours are sped,
Oh, Knights of the Table Round.

What though those days be fled,
Still val'rous hearts abound,
And blissful hours are sped,
O' nights at the table round.



Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Money Talks

Money talks and tells a sordid story;
Money's always talking nowadays,
Talking to the young and to the hoary;
Money's got us going forty ways.

Money greets milady in her carriage,
Hails the demi-monde upon the street;
Money very often talks of marriage;
Money's way of wooing's hard to beat.

Money is a festive Bunco-Steerer;
Money very seldom speaks to me.
Mostly when it does it is to murmur,
"Stung!" "Skiddoo for yours!" or "Twenty-three!"



3 Other Songs of the Street

Get Wise

Remember when deliverin' the goods,
There's lots of has-beens in
the deep, dark woods

What had it in them though they're up the
spout—

Let them down easy fer they had the hunch.
Though there is lots of pikers in the bunch,
'Tain't only phoneys that is down and out.

Suppose you'd drew a lemon at the start,
It might have knocked yer nerve er broke yer heart.

If you had missed a boost an' drawn a roast;
If Luck had blew you up er trun you down,
Instead of owning half this one-eyed town,
You might be lingerin' about the post.

So when you pipe a feller to the bad,
Until you've doped the kind of deal he's had,
Withhold the hammer an' forbear to knock—
If you'd stacked up against the deal he drew,
An' if he'd held the cards they dealt to you,
He might have had you beat about a block.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Shut Up!

What's the use of kickin'
In an aimless sort of way?
What's the use of knockin'?
If you've nothin' good to say,
Shut up!

What's the use complainin'
That the game ain't on the square?
There's mighty few will listen,
An' fewer still will care—
Shut up!

What's the use of talkin'
Of the "good old days gone by"?
There's lots to do preparin'
Fer them that's drawin' nigh.
Shut up!

3 Other Songs of the Street

What's the use of blamin'
Everything upon your luck,
When it's ten times better bettin'
That it's just your lack of pluck?
Shut up!

What's the use declarin'
That the cards is always stacked,
An' that nothin's on the level,
Fer you know it's not the fact?
Shut up!

Get out an' study laughin',
Go on an' learn to smile;
You might even tackle singin'
If you practised fer a while—
Tune up!



Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



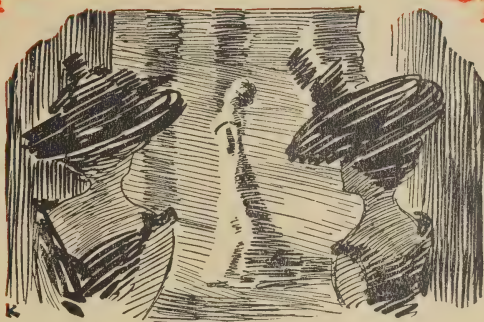
Envy

Oh, happy hobo in the streets,
If I'd my way I'd choose
To think your very thoughtless thoughts,
And idly booze and snooze.

You're bound by no ambition's chains
As o'er the pave you slink;
Your lazy lot, oh drunken sot,
Is just to drink and sink.

There, in your rum-reared paradise,
Contented you abide—
Ah, bootless bum, thou mortal scum,
Is that your side of pride?

3 Other Songs of the Street



A Kick

For hers, the spotlight all the while;
We have to wave the festive-foot.
No wonder that she cracks a smile—
For hers, the spotlight all the while.
She's got it beat about a mile.
While we get fined fer lookin' cute,
For hers, the spotlight all the while;
We have to wave the festive-foot.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



A Tip

If you would win eternal fame
Throughout this stricken land,
My lad, it's up to you to take
A hammer in your hand.

Then hold your mitt behind your back,
And with a visage bland,
Go out to seek advancement with
That hammer in your hand.

In Love, or War, or Politics,
Just let your grin expand;
But always keep a purchase on
The hammer in your hand.

Then, though the wily Bunco Boy
May try to beat the band,
He can't hand you a lemon if
Your hammer's in your hand.

3 Other Songs of the Street



A Vesper Song

Beat the boot, an' blow the town,
Out along the dusty road;
Hear me sing me bloomin' ode
While the sun is sinkin' down.

Out among the fields an' trees,
Cut the city streets an' hike;
Poundin' down the Pleasant Pike,
Sniff the perfumes in the breeze.

I've a soul the same as you,
Towns has broke their pick wid me;
Tell the coppers twenty-three,
Wish them all a fond skiddoo.

Sour Sonnets of a Sorehead



Life

This world is just a stage, and we
Must do our stunt of comedy,
Or mouth our tragic little book
Till Death shall murmur "Get the hook!"

Acknowledgment

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